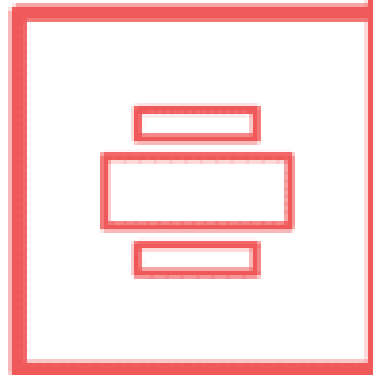
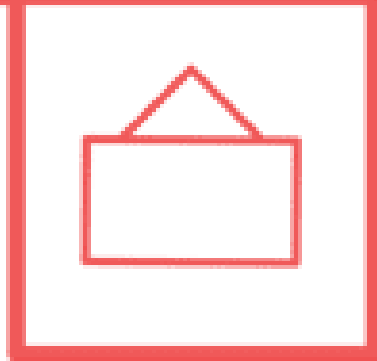


team



better  
block

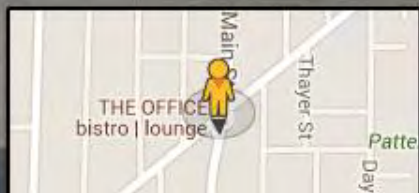


148 E Cuyahoga Falls Ave

Akron, Ohio

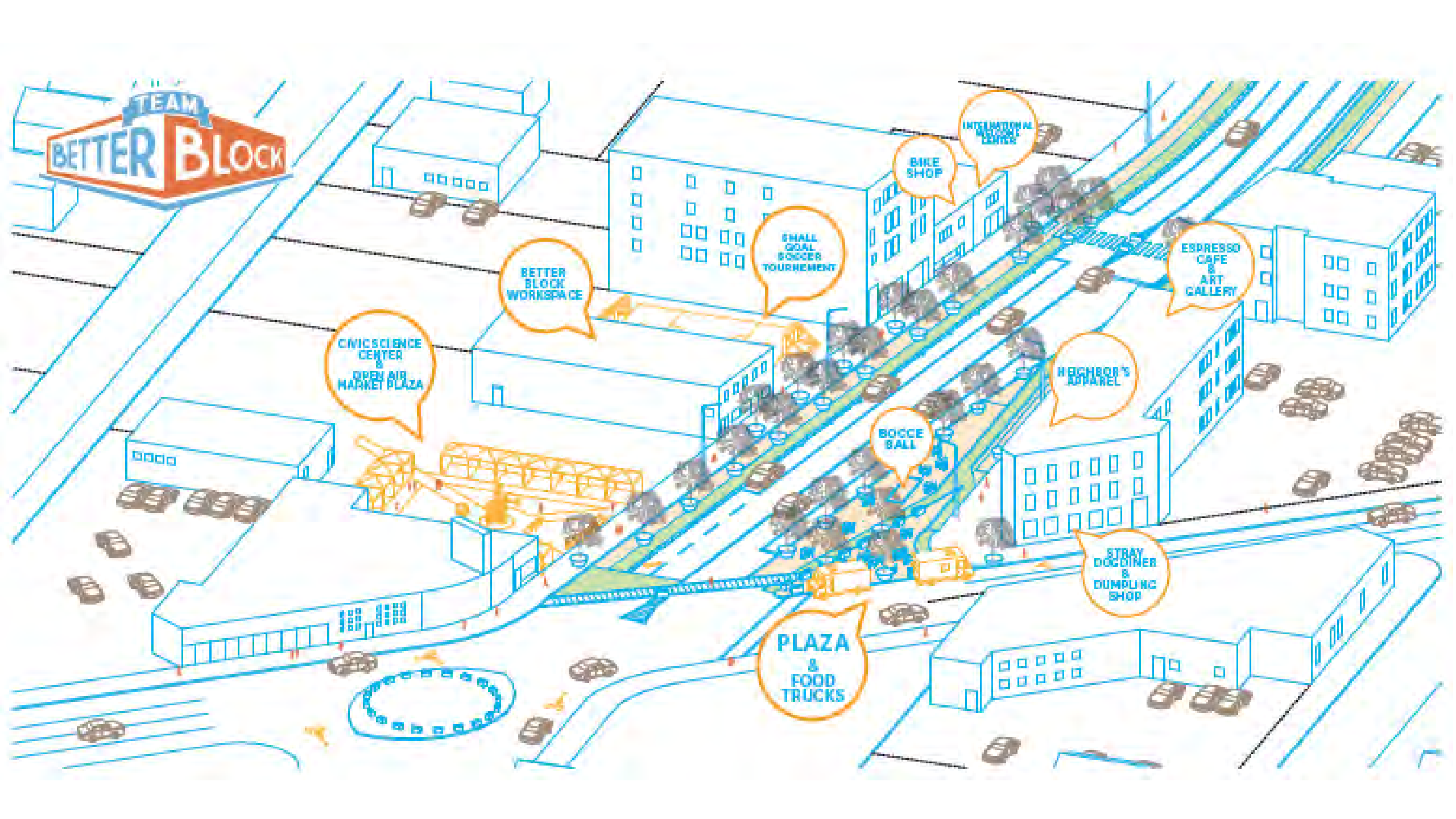


Street View - Aug 2014



Google





TEAM  
BETTER BLOCK

CIVIC SCIENCE  
CENTER  
&  
OPEN AIR  
MARKET PLAZA

BETTER  
BLOCK  
WORKSPACE

SMALL  
GOAL  
SOCCER  
TOURNAMENT

BIKE  
SHOP

INTERNATIONAL  
MUSEUM  
CENTER

ESPRESSO  
CAFE  
&  
ART  
GALLERY

NEIGHBOR'S  
APPAREL

BOCCIE  
BALL

STRAY  
DOG DINER  
&  
DUMPLING  
SHOP

PLAZA  
&  
FOOD  
TRUCKS













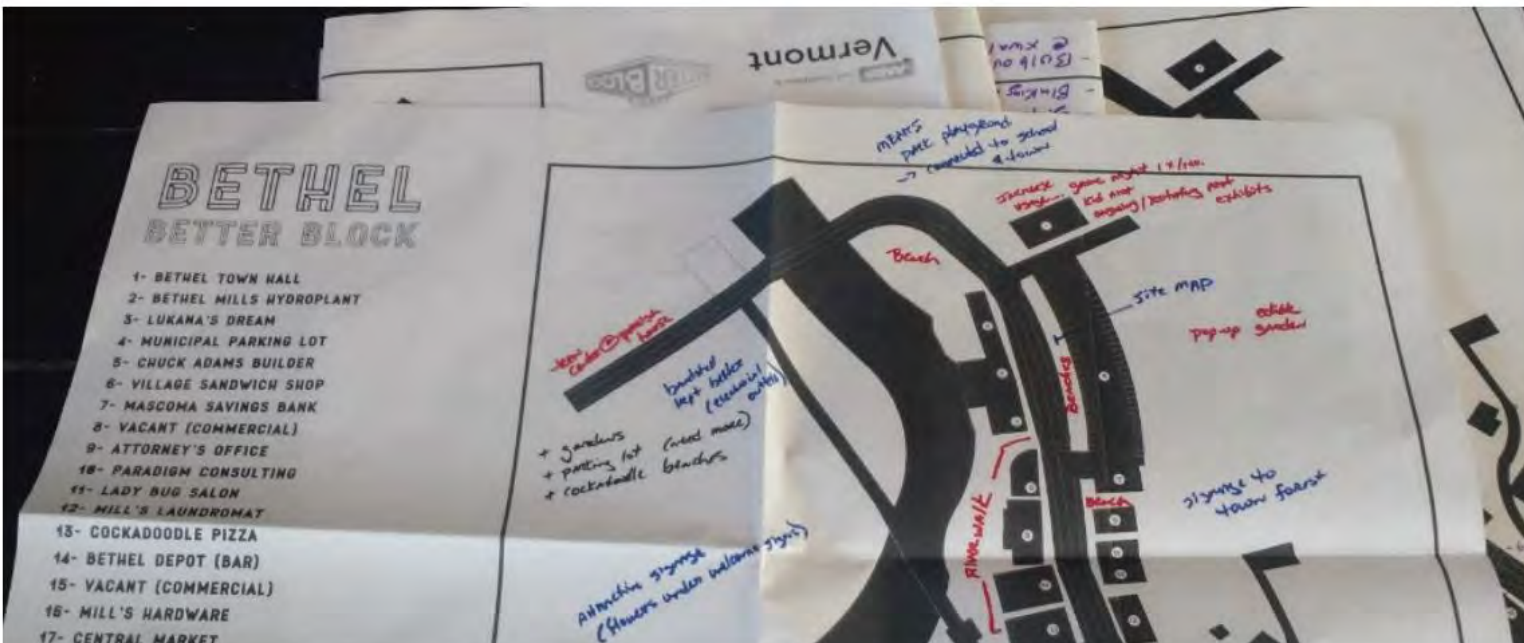




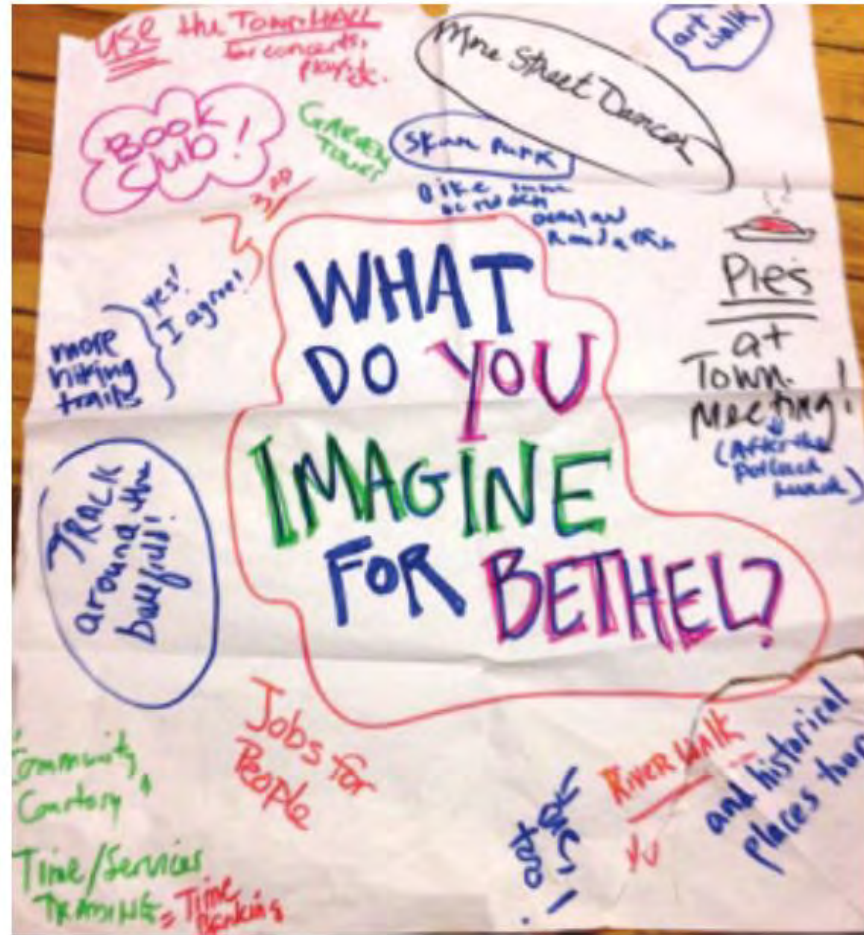
## 01.

A community-led walk of the Bethel Downtown took place in June of 2016, and was followed by a resident conversation discussing opportunities for pop-up businesses, street modifications, new public spaces and many other small interventions aimed at improving livability.

Residents filled in maps and surveys with ideas that were culled by the Vermont Better Block team into a series of concepts that had the greatest potential for implementation.

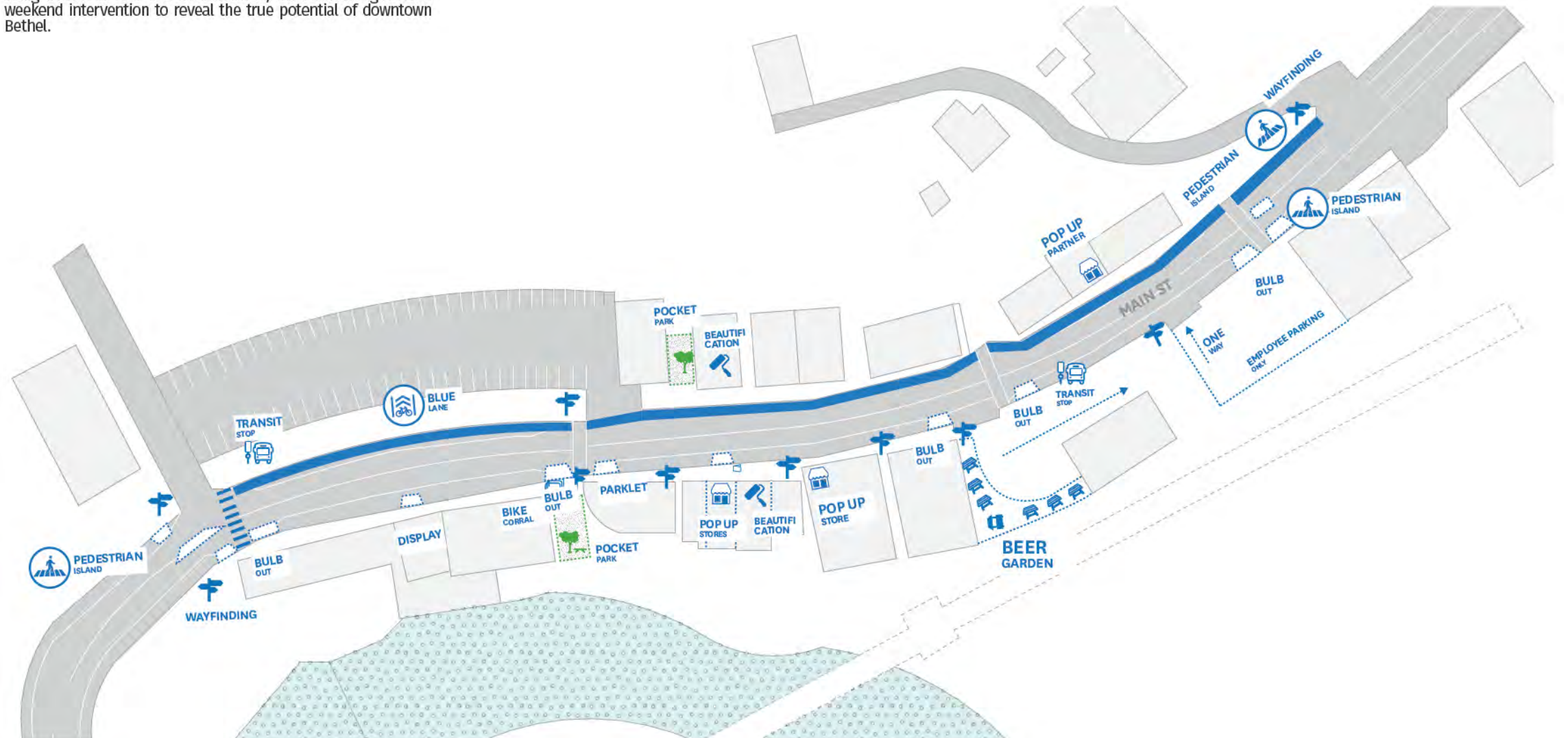






## 02. Concept Map

Working with key property owners, advocates, designers and residents the Team conceptualized ideas for landscaping, storefront facade improvements, and programming to the area. The concept plan below highlights areas for temporary interventions using materials that can be borrowed, built and bought for a weekend intervention to reveal the true potential of downtown Bethel.





## 02. Community Build





## 02. Community Build







**AUTO DOMINATED  
STREET**



**VACANT  
STOREFRONTS**



**NO SIDEWALK  
DINING**



**LACK OF  
GREEN**





**ACTIVE  
STOREFRONTS**



**SIDEWALK  
DINING**



**MULTIMODAL  
STREET**



**MORE  
GREEN**





**PARKLET**  
- NEW CAFE SEATING



**BULB OUT**  
- BEAUTIFICATION  
- PEDESTRIAN PROTECTION



**BLUE LANE**  
- NEW TRANSPORT  
- TRAFFIC CALMING





## 05. Blue Lane

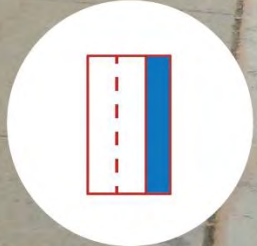
The largest intervention to the street was the addition of over 700 feet of a dedicated lane for people using alternative transportation. Bethel's blue lane was the first test of a multi-purpose lane like this in the United States.







**CAR ONLY**  
BEFORE  
BETTER BLOCK



**BLUE LANE**  
ACCESS FOR ALL  
PEOPLE



03.

# Blue Lane

While no horses used the blue lane during the weekend test, many bicyclists, walkers, scooter riders, and dog walkers approved. Many adults and children alike mentioned that this was the first time they had safely biked downtown.

## BLUE LANE

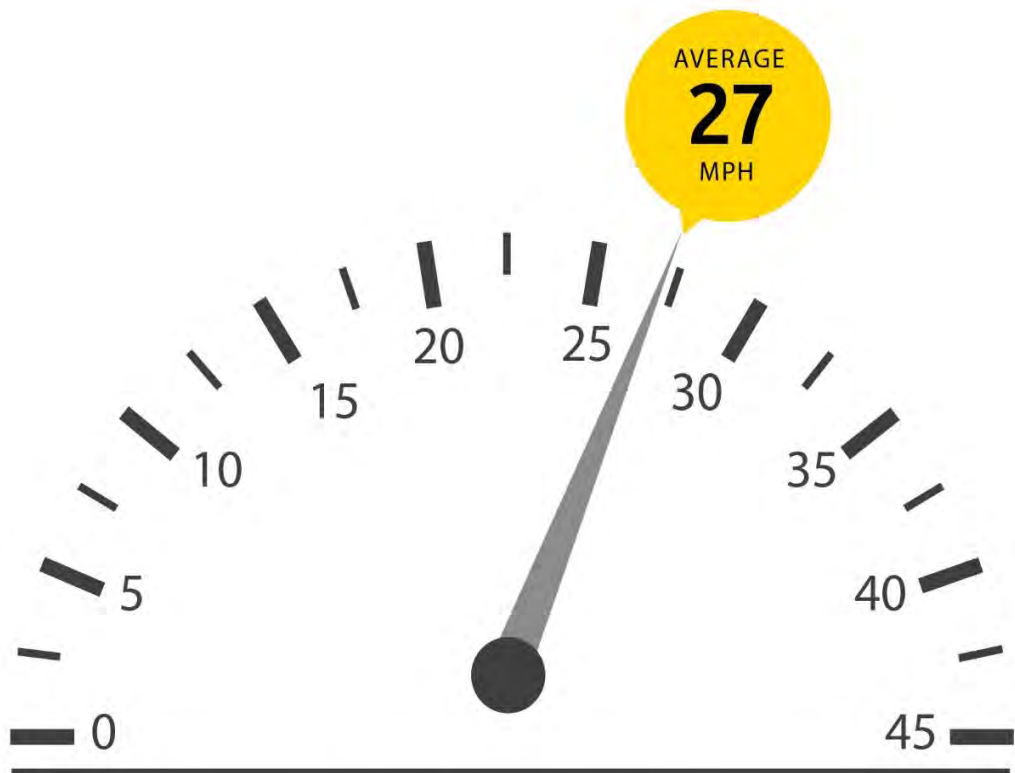
*Open to:*

BIKES	WHEELCHAIRS
STROLLERS	SEGWAYS
HORSES	DOG WALKERS
DANCERS	SKATEBOARDERS
ROLLERBLADERS	CARTWHEELERS
FLYING CARPETS	SCOOTERS

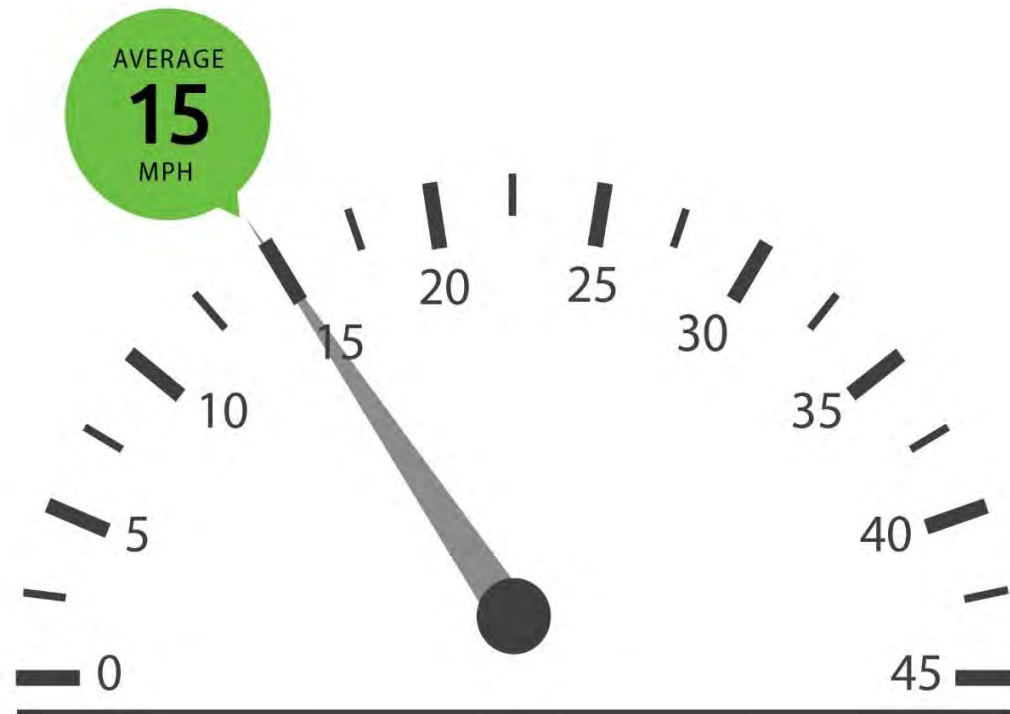
Please be considerate and share the lane.  
Keep right and pass on the left.







(Before Better Block)

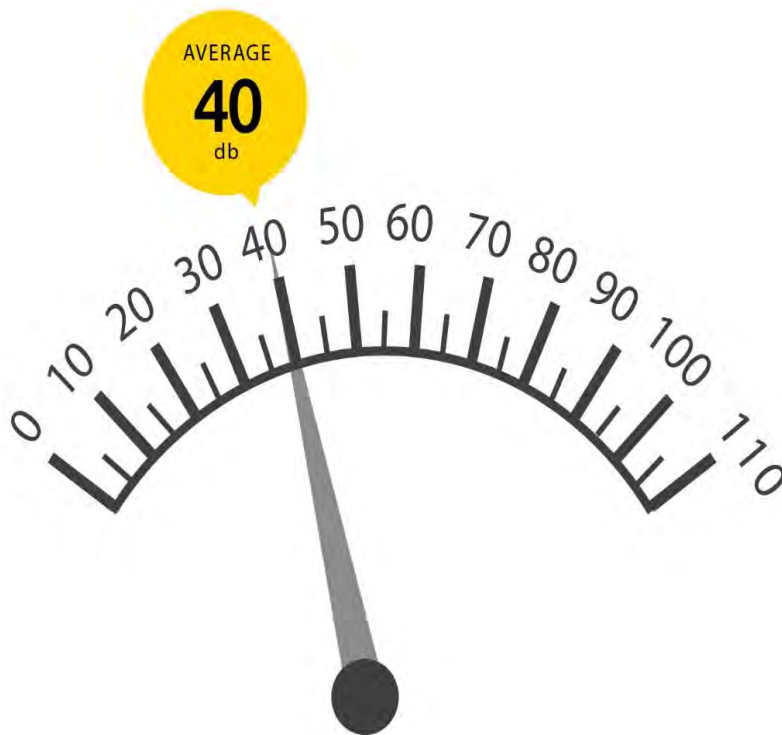


(During Better Block)





(Before Better Block)



(During Better Block)

SCALE

- 110 dB | Rock Concert
- 100 dB | Blow Dryer
- 90 dB | Semi Truck at Highway speed
- 80 dB | Alarm Clock
- 70 dB | Busy Traffic
- 60 dB | Conversation at a Cafe
- 50 dB | Rainfalling
- 40 dB | Quiet Library
- 30 dB | Whisper
- 20 dB | Ticking Watch
- 10 dB | Breathing



### 03.

# Parklet

Parklets calm traffic by narrowing the street, like a bulb-out, and give another visual cue to drivers that this place is different and worth a stop.



BEFORE

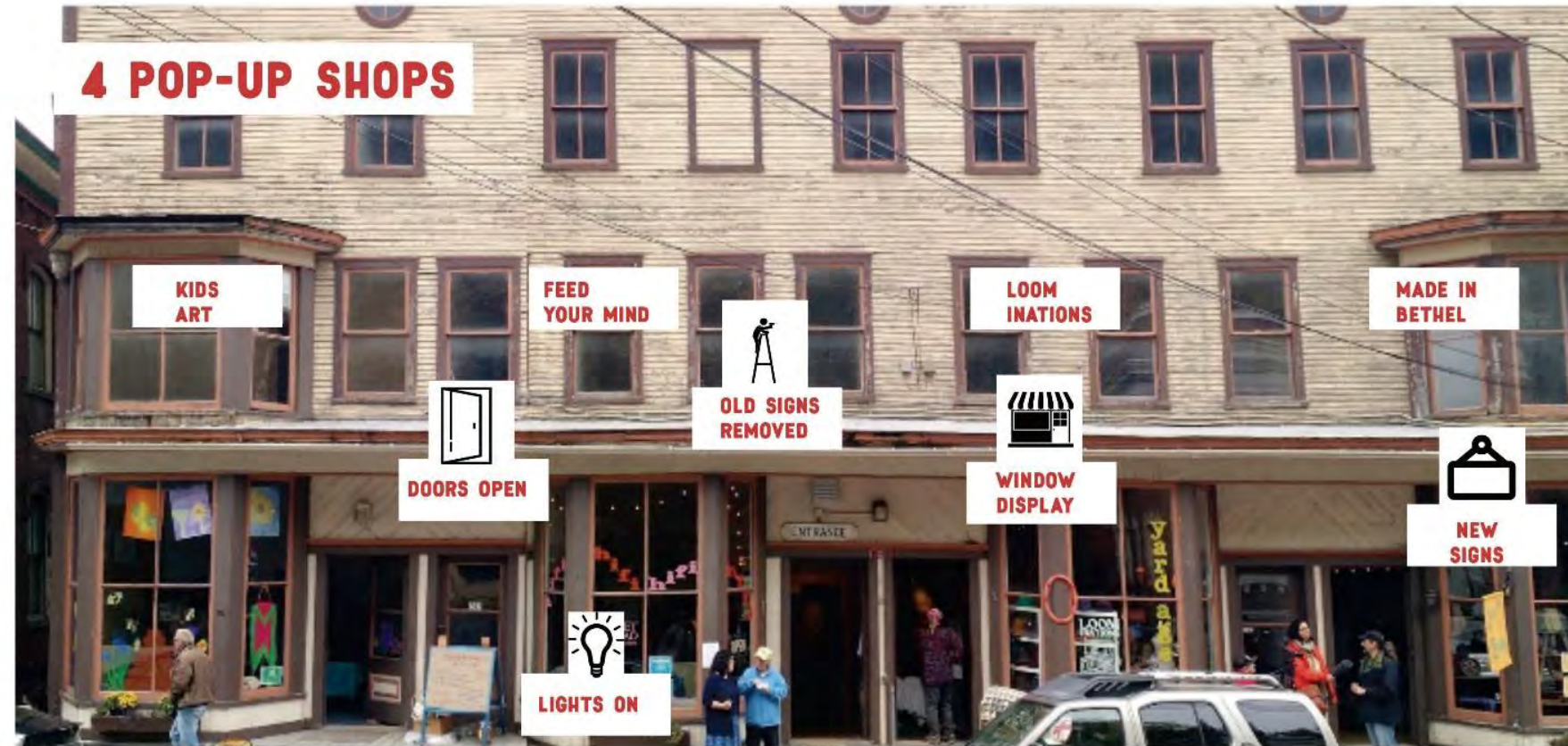


AFTER











# 05. Appendix | Surveys

Bethel hosted Vermont's first Better Block project from Sept. 30-Oct. 2, 2016. We experimented with pop-up shops, a temporary bike lane and street improvements, public art, pop-up beer garden and live music venue, hikes and activities, taco stand and more. It was an effort to test out changes that could become permanent in an effort to make Bethel more vibrant, accessible and creative. Here's what we found.

## Direct Outcomes

**\$4,881**  
Dollars earned by pop-up businesses during Better Block

**12**  
Number of temporary businesses running during Better Block

**27**  
Average traffic speed before Better Block

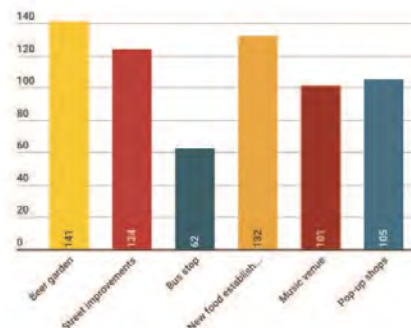
**15**  
Average traffic speed with experimental traffic calming

**Alarm clock**  
Average decibel level (80) of traffic before Better Block

**Quiet library**  
Average decibel level (60) of traffic with experimental traffic calming

## Top Changes

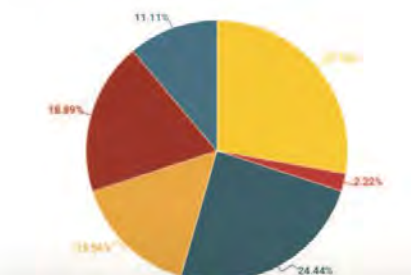
At Better Block, we asked people to vote for their favorite change or intervention. These were the winners.



## Survey Results

We asked community members to fill out an online survey in the weeks after Better Block, telling us how they participated and what they liked or didn't like.

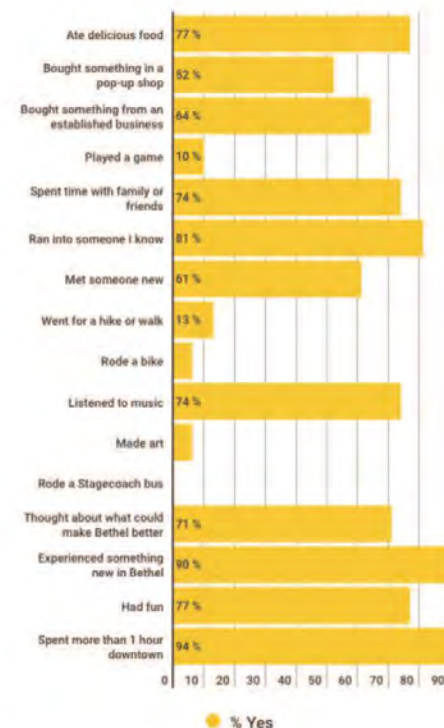
How did you hear about Better Block?



Legend: BRI (Yellow), AARP (Red), Word of mouth (Dark Blue), Poster or flyer (Orange), Social media (Dark Red), Newspaper, TV, radio (Light Blue)

At Better Block, I...

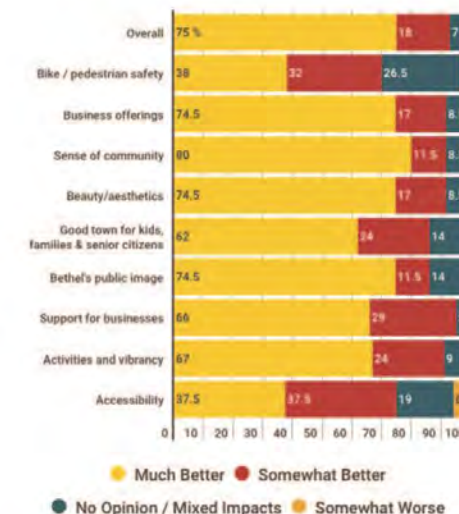
“ Got excited about seeing what the town could be :)  
- attendee



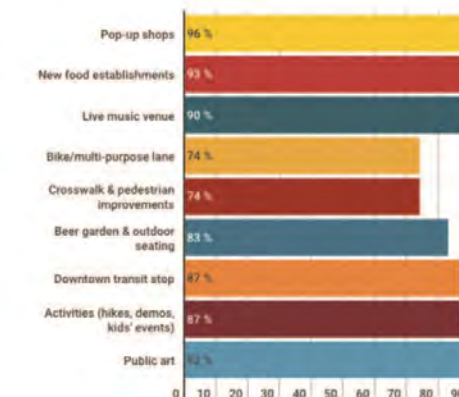
“ Parking was somewhat of a challenge, but worth it.  
- attendee

“ Town was much more difficult to drive through [with] bike lanes and center islands.  
- attendee

I think Better Block had the following impact on downtown Bethel (during the event itself...)



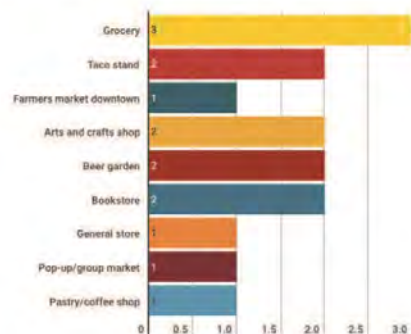
I would like to see more of these (or permanent) improvements.





” The book box was genius!  
- attendee

The new businesses I would most like to see are...



” Stores were not wheelchair accessible.  
- attendee

If I could make one permanent change to downtown Bethel, it would be...



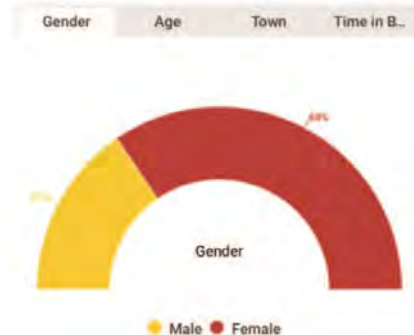
” I would love to see more growth while keeping things local, supporting artisans and small businesses.  
- attendee

” I would love to see more growth while keeping things local, supporting artisans and small businesses.  
- attendee

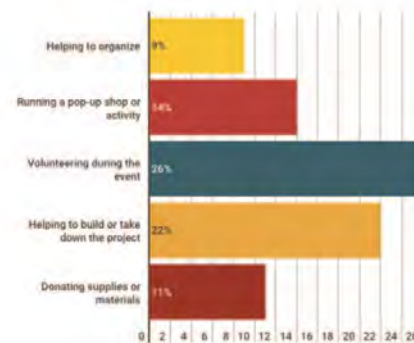
## Survey Respondents

Here are the details about the people who responded to our survey.

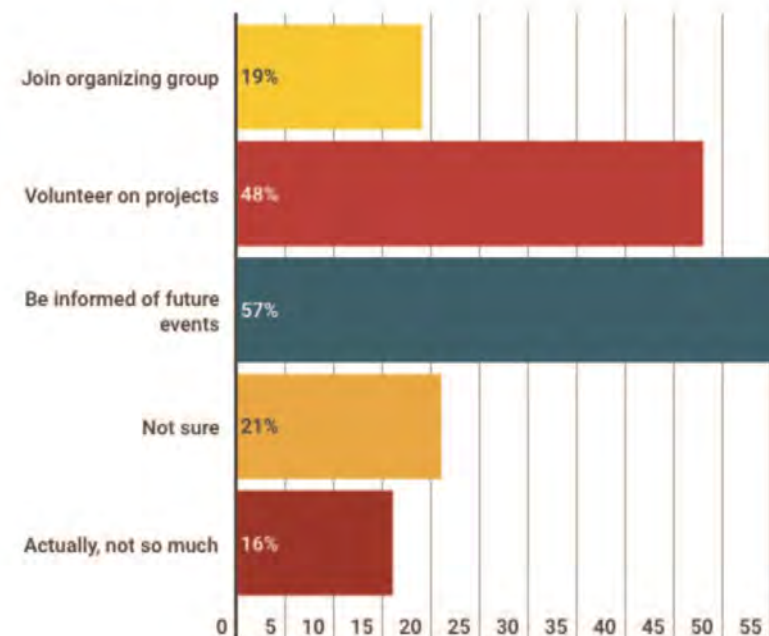
### Demographics



I participated in Better Block by...

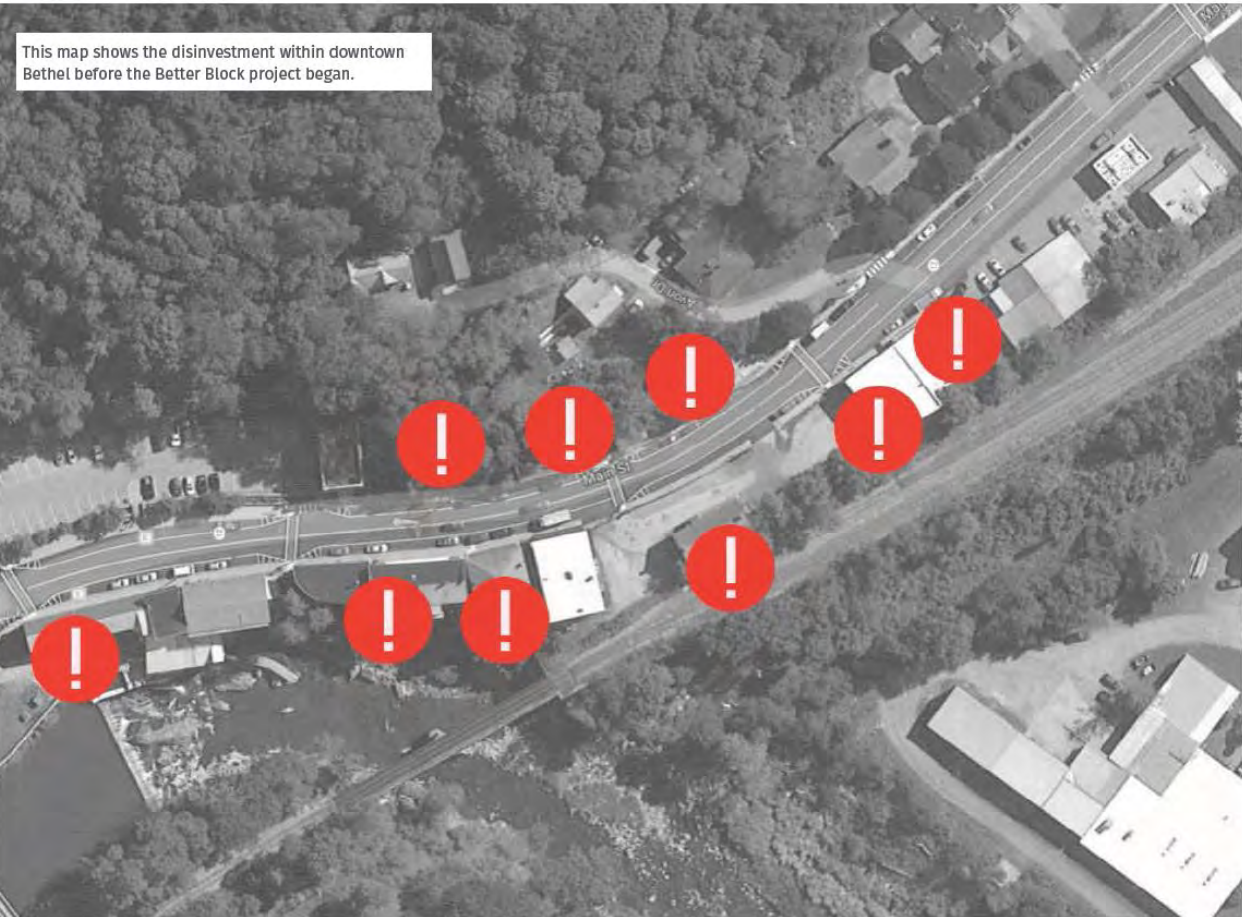


I would like to stay involved in the following ways...





BEFORE BETTER BLOCK



AFTER BETTER BLOCK





#### DURING BETTER BLOCK

Volunteers created a pop up sweet shop, vinyl music store, and arts and craft center in the Blossum Block Building. Over the three day event, the stores saw many patrons and sales generated from the once dormant, vacant spaces.



#### BEFORE BETTER BLOCK

The Arnold Block building was sold in December 2017 and is now home to a community-driven multi-part business: Bethel Works, Bethel Moves, Bethel Meets, and Bethel Cooks @ the Arnold Block. The new owners started this venture to support local entrepreneurs and professionals, to meet community needs by acting as a business incubator and a resource for freelance workers, and by offering accommodations for community gatherings. So far, the Arnold Block is furnishing office space to seven area freelance professionals and graduate students. It has also hosted several Bethel University classes and a town committee meeting that otherwise would not have been possible (due to the poor Internet service in our area). It will soon host a gathering of regional and statewide stakeholders interested in the technical aspects of the traffic-calming pilot program. This event will be made possible by AARP Vermont, our Better Block sponsors.











*Thanks for a  
great year of BU  
classes at the  
Arnold Block!*

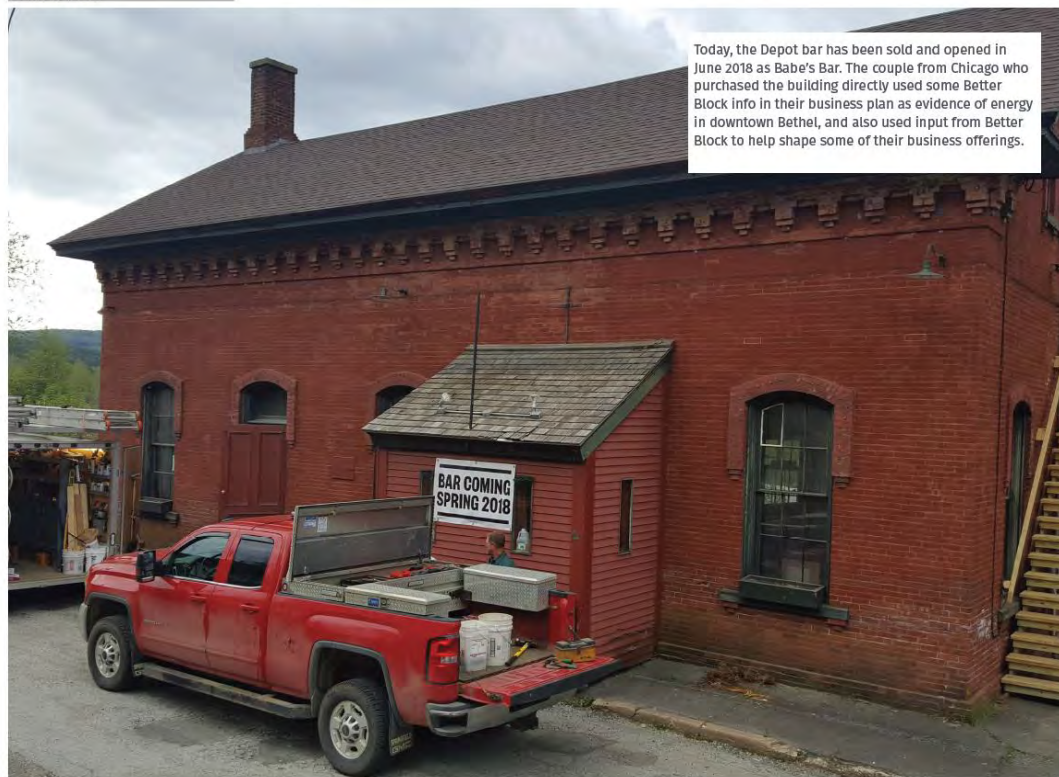






First  
day of  
coworking  
= success!





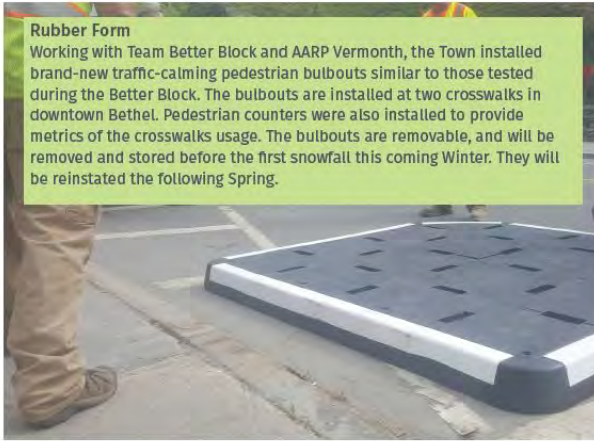
Today, the Depot bar has been sold and opened in June 2018 as Babe's Bar. The couple from Chicago who purchased the building directly used some Better Block info in their business plan as evidence of energy in downtown Bethel, and also used input from Better Block to help shape some of their business offerings.



In spring of 2017 BRI won a \$15,000 Animating Infrastructure grant from the Vermont Arts Council to make possible three public art projects in downtown Bethel. A trout mural — designed by artist Mary Lacy and executed by the artist and the Bethel community, was placed on the retaining wall at the intersection of routes 12 and 107. This inspiring piece of art is seen by hundreds of daily passerbys, and covers an ugly, cracked retaining wall.



Working with Team Better Block and AARP Vermont, the Town installed brand-new traffic-calming pedestrian bulbouts similar to those tested during the Better Block. The bulbouts are installed at two crosswalks in downtown Bethel. Pedestrian counters were also installed to provide metrics of the crosswalks usage. The bulbouts are removable, and will be removed and stored before the first snowfall this coming Winter. They will be reinstated the following Spring.

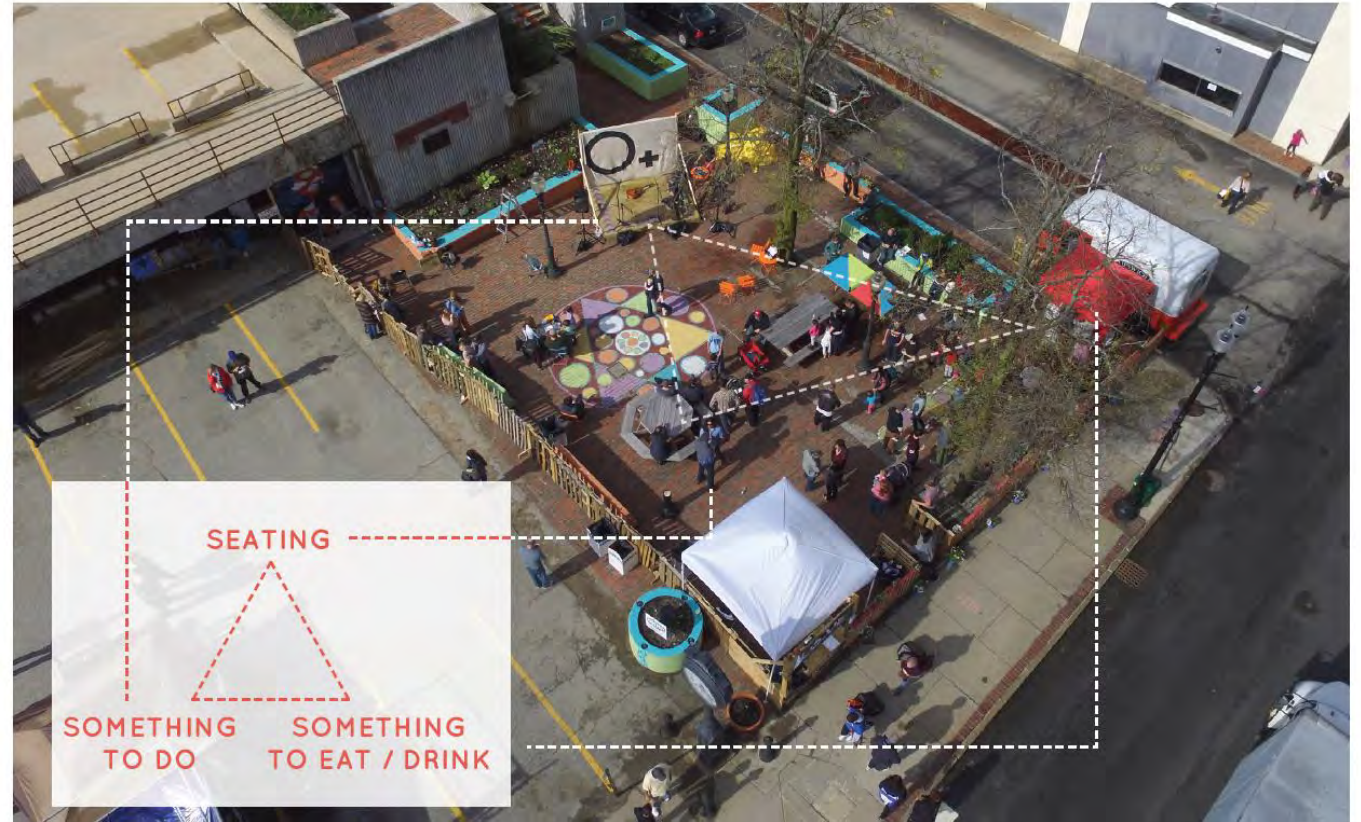




# placemaking 101

“What attracts people most, it would appear, is other people.”

-William H. Wyle

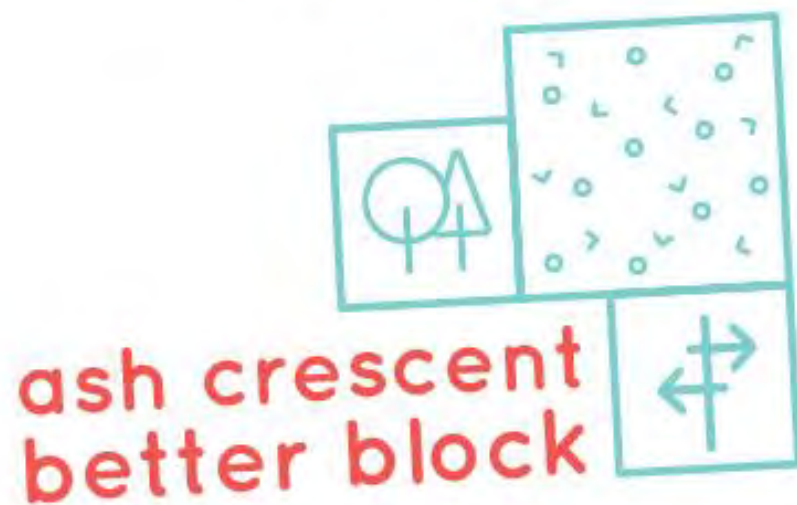


PLACEMAKING TRIANGULATION





Give it a name.



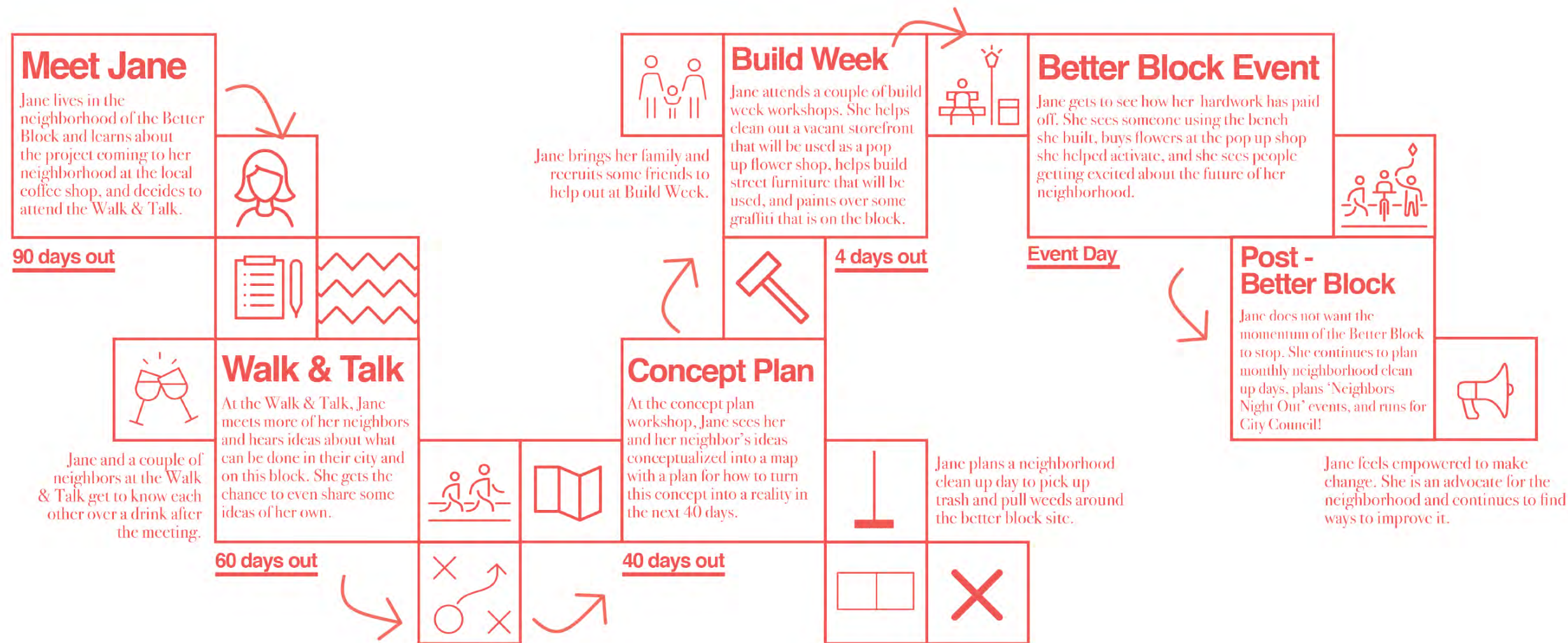


Set a date.





# THE PROCESS ONLY TAKES 90 DAYS BUT IT LEAVES A BIG IMPACT.



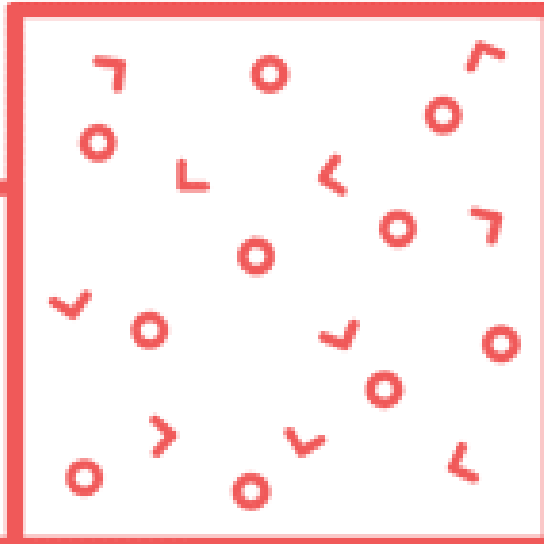
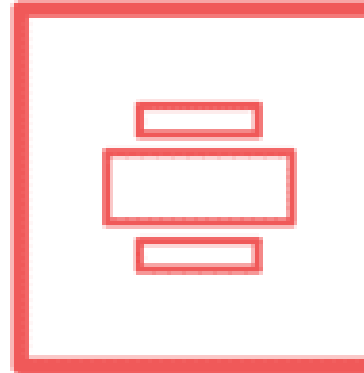


# Make it public.





team



better  
block

